25 May 1994

Secretariat of the
Social Summit

World Summit for Social Development
Preparatory Committee
Second Session, New York
22 August - 2 September 1994

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DRAFT DECLARATION

AND

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF ACTION

UNITED NATIONS

Note

1. The Draft Declaration and Draft Programme of Action (A/CONF.166/PC/L.13) are to be considered by the Preparatory Committee in August 1994.

2. At the request of the Committee, these documents are to be issued at the beginning of June 1994 in order to generate as large a debate as possible within the international community before the August session.

3. Following the meeting of the Preparatory Committee in August, the Draft Declaration and the Draft Programme of Action will be reformulated for submission to the same Committee in January 1995. Then, texts will be proposed to Heads of State and Government in Copenhagen in March 1995.

DRAFT DECLARATION

1. The Draft Declaration defines social progress as respect for the dignity of each human being, material and spiritual development of each community, and solidarity among groups and nations.

2. It states that social progress should be a priority for the international community, is possible to achieve, and requires the concerted efforts of all concerned: governments, the civil society, international and regional organizations.

3. Current social problems are outlined in the document - poverty, lack of remunerative employment, violence, social disintegration - which suggest that the moral fiber of contemporary societies is weakening.

4. Major trends - positive, negative, and mostly ambivalent - are also outlined: access to freedom and autonomy of large number of people, end of apartheid, progress in the equality of women, better relation of mankind with the environment, "globalisation" of communications, exchanges, technological advances and economic decisions, risk of increased uniformity.

5. Social progress requires placing the human person at the centre of all thinking and all decisions. It also requires a greater solidarity between individuals, groups and nations. Solidarity is a moral imperative and a source of mutual enrichment.

6. Each nation is invited to set a target, with a precise time horizon, for the elimination of extreme poverty. It is also stated that inequalities of all types should be reduced.

7. The right to work and, in economic terms, full employment, are presented as legitimate objectives. Employment should be at the centre of all economic and social policies and should be a major aspect of the strategies of private enterprises. Entrepreneurs have responsibilities for the common good.

8. Social integration, or the capacity of people to live together harmoniously, is presented as the major question of our time. There is a continuum between the various levels of integration, from the family to the international community.

9. Responsibility, freedom, and solidarity, are mentioned as the three core values of a renaissance seen as necessary on the eve of the twenty-first century.

10. The last point of the Draft Declaration is to stress that the implementation of the proposed Programme of Action, and, more generally, social progress, requires the active involvement of all actors.

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF ACTION

The Draft Programme of Action has five parts:

I. An enabling environment
II. Reduction and elimination of widespread poverty
III. Productive employment and the reduction of unemployment
IV. Social integration
V. Means of implementation and follow-up

I. AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

1. There is an increasing interdependence resulting from the rapid expansion of global markets, improvements in technologies and communications, and global scope of many problems including threats to the environment, organized crime, drug trafficking, as well as greater movements of peoples.

2. The capacity of governments to make independent policy decisions has been reduced; multilateral, cooperative action is required.

3. To create a favourable economic environment, the following measures are recommended:

- With regard to trade, the products of many developing countries continue to face trade barriers; the work programme of the World Trade Organization should include specific processes to reduce such barriers, especially for the least developed countries;
- As debt servicing represents resources which could be better spent on social programmes, debt reduction remains a priority; action should be taken on the specific proposals already tabled and on new initiatives to reduce the debt for African and least developed countries;
- Structural adjustment programmes ought to be tailored to the conditions of individual countries, ought to include a full examination of alternative measures to achieve macroeconomic stability, and ought to emphasize a fair sharing of the burden of adjustment among the various social groups;
- Official Development Assistance remains important; the target of 0.7 percent of GNP of donor countries for ODA should be respected; the rules and procedures governing ODA should be made more amenable to social programmes;
- Private capital should also be increasingly geared towards socially desirable investments and activities.

4. To create a favourable political environment,

- Greater attention should be given to the role of the state as the guardian of the common interest;
- A greater reliance on market mechanisms is a positive development; accountability and responsibility of all actors on the market scene should be defined at the national and international levels;
- Shared common values, acceptance of fundamental human rights - including through ratification of existing conventions - should constitute the base for international cooperation;
- Referring to the Agenda for Peace and the role of the United Nations in peacekeeping and peacemaking, the Draft Programme calls upon governments to consider ways to reduce tensions and violence, and to release resources currently utilized for military purposes.

II. REDUCTION AND ELIMINATION OF WIDESPREAD POVERTY

1. A global approach to the reduction and elimination of poverty is advocated. This approach would entail:

- The shaping of macroeconomic and social policies around the objective of reduction of poverty (in many cases, reduction of unemployment or under employment will be the same as reduction of poverty);
- Integration of specific anti-poverty policies in development strategies;
- The mobilization of all actors in the development process for the elimination of poverty;
- Access of the poor to opportunities and productive assets.

2. The access to productive opportunities is presented as a key element of anti-poverty policies.

- The rural poor needs access to credit, land, water, and market information;
- The informal sector ought to be supported through appropriate regulations and credit policies;
- Forceful policies are required to break the vicious circle which characterises the situation of poor women who are both fully occupied and enable to get access to productive resources.

3. Access to basic public services is also a condition for the reduction of poverty; education and health services remain particularly critical.

4. Food insecurity and other forms of vulnerability call for immediate action by local institutions, governments and international agencies.

5. Those who cannot support themselves, because of disability, old age, unemployment, or other causes, have a right for assistance and protection; one of the roles of governments is to provide such protection.

III. PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND THE REDUCTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT

1. To place employment at the centre of development strategies means in particular:
   - Reformulating national and international economic policies;
   - Broadening the conception of work, as recognized by society, and creating opportunities for participation in work life;
   - Revisiting the traditional division of the life cycle into three distinct periods of education, work and retirement;
   - Considering that more jobs, and jobs of a better quality, are essential to the functioning of societies.

2. There is a need to improve the employment content of current patterns of growth. In particular, the effect of unemployment, of technological changes should be anticipated and, to the extent possible, planned.

3. Small enterprises and cooperative business enterprises should and can generate more employment, provided unnecessary legal and regulatory obstacles are removed.

4. Sectoral priorities should be adjusted to national circumstances; in some cases, more employment can be created in the agricultural sector.

5. It is possible to promote employment through the expansion of socially useful work and through work sharing arrangements.

6. The specific needs of young people, women workers, long term unemployed, disabled workers, indigenous peoples and migrant workers, ought to be recognised; governments should ratify the existing instruments pertaining to migrant workers.

7. The expansion of basic education, and the reorientation of vocational training and apprenticeship programmes, are requirements for more and better employment opportunities.

IV. SOCIAL INTEGRATION

1. The objective of social integration is not to eliminate differences but to enable different groups to live together in productive and cooperative harmony.

2. Social integration must be founded on internationally accepted human values and norms.

3. Social integration cannot be achieved through coercive means; it requires the free and active participation of individuals.

4. Discrimination in all its forms must be eliminated to achieve social integration based on equality and a respect for human dignity.

5. Education and employment are key factors for social integration.

6. Access for all to basic education is vital to the fostering of shared values in society; enabling girls to complete their education is of fundamental importance; special attention needs to the given to the provision of school facilities for children in a disadvantaged situation.

7. Policies for the disadvantaged groups should be designed so as to secure and retain public support on a scale commensurate with needs.

8. Policies to protect migrants and to promote decent conditions for them will enhance their contribution to the host society; migrants once admitted have the right to the full protection of the laws of the host society.

9. Government services have to be brought closer to the people; one approach is devolution or decentralization.

10. Space must be provided for the free interplay of the various actors of civil society.

V. MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

1. National governments have a key role in implementing and monitoring the recommendations of the Summit, taking fully into account the involvement of the civil society and the participation of all citizens in the development process.

2. Policies for social development and social progress - including with regard to the three core issues of the Summit - are both sectoral and cross-sectoral, and have strong economic components.

3. Governments are invited to elaborate "national strategies for social progress". These will reflect national priorities and targets within the objectives and principles adopted by the Summit; governments are also invited to review their institutional arrangements so as to ensure "equal treatment" to ministries and administrations responsible for social programmes.

4. Solidarity requires increased transfers of resources from the affluent to the poor, both within and among nations.

5. International cooperation for social development should be expanded, for governments as well as other institutions, including trade unions, cooperatives, professional and trade associations, and academic and research institutions. The exchange of experiences offers an extremely useful domain for such cooperation.

6. A Youth Voluntary Service to the community at the world level should be considered to instill in young people a sense of service to the community, to give them the opportunity to live with people from different cultures, and to create a sense of solidarity at the world level.

7. The role of the United Nations and of the United Nations system to promote cooperation for social progress should be reviewed. There are a number of requirements to take into account:

- While social issues are becoming more and more important, the role of the United Nations is less significant than it was a few decades ago;
- A greater visibility needs to be given to social development and its problems;
- The Commission for Social Development needs to be "revigorated"; the added value of the Commission, as well as that of ECOSOC, to the General Assembly mandates and functions on social development, is minimal;
- There is still a need for an integrated approach to social, economic, cultural, and political issues, although the experience achieved suggests that the "integration" has been detrimental to both the visibility of social issues and the quality of social programmes;
- The specialized agencies - notably ILO, UNESCO, WHO and FAO - as well as the United Nations programmes - notably UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA - should continue to contribute to cooperation for social development within their mandates; the same applies to the World Bank and the IMF. The core of the problem, with regard to enhancing international cooperation for social progress, would appear to be within the United Nations (see for instance the absence of an overall report on the "state of the world" from an economic, social, cultural, environmental and political perspective);
- The role of the General Assembly for policy discussion on development matters - including social - should be enhanced;
- A partial solution would be to entrust the United Nations with the implementation of specific programmes stemming from the Social Summit (on social integration, on the reduction of poverty, on the economic and social facets of the employment problem, etc.).

8. Social development requires the mobilization of all available human and physical resources; poverty is not only a scandal, but also a waste; the same applies to excessive inequalities. Social development also requires the development and proper functioning of a large number of institutions.

9. Financing is an added requirement:
   - At the national level, a review of existing priorities in the allocation of resources will be encouraged;
   - It should be noted that the 20/20 proposal (20 percent of government expenditure in developing countries for social sectors and 20 percent of development aid to the same social sectors) relates to the consent of "human development". The reduction of poverty and the creation of employment opportunities, as well as some facets of social integration, pertains to development as a whole;
   - New financing mechanism should be developed to address global problems such as HIV/AIDS, drug trafficking, organized crime, and food security.

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